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SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: AMB ORDWAY MEETS DFM SHAKIROV: BWC COMING SOON,
WMDIE-K PPI APPEARS STALLED

1. (SBU) Summary/Background: Ambassador Ordway met with Deputy Foreign Minister Askar Shakirov January 19 in Astana. The meeting focused primarily on nonproliferation issues. Shakirov indicated that the GOK is not yet ready to sign the WMDIE-K PPI agreement. However, Shakirov did provide clear reassurance on the GOK's commitment to continue the mission in Iraq despite the recent casualties suffered by the KazBat. He also indicated that the GOK is moving forward with ratification of the Biological Weapons Convention, a process he expects to be completed within the next few months.

2. (U) Shakirov, 48, was appointed one of five Deputy Foreign Ministers in August 2004 after a six-year posting as Ambassador to India. His portfolio, most of which was previously handled by former first deputy minister and current Ambassador to Switzerland Abuseitov, includes nonproliferation, multilateral cooperation, international organizations, multilateral conferences such as CICA and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, anti-terrorism and export controls. End Summary/Background.

Strong Support on Iraq; Progress Imminent on BWC

3. (SBU) At his first meeting with Ambassador Ordway, Shakirov made a point of underlining Kazakhstan's determination to see the Iraq mission through to completion. He said unequivocally that, despite the recent casualty in the KazBat battalion, Kazakhstan would be with the coalition "to the end." He also took the opportunity to talk up Kazakhstan's partnership in the global coalition against terrorism, citing the success of GOK security forces in October 2004 in uncovering Al Qaeda- and IMU-linked organizations and the upcoming UN Counterterrorism Committee meeting on counterterrorism to be held in Almaty January 26-28. (Note: In a January 24 meeting, the chairman of the Parliament's International Affairs committee told the Ambassador that in a closed session the 15-member committee had unanimously agreed to support continuation of KazBat's presence in Iraq. End Note)

4. (SBU) Shakirov also mentioned that the Ministry of Education and Science is working on draft legislation that would complete Kazakhstan's accession to the Biological Weapons Convention. Although the legislation needs interagency approval and a parliamentary vote, Shakirov estimated that it would be a matter of months rather than a year for all the procedures to be finished. He cited the G8 Global Partnership as an impetus for the GOK's drive to formally join BWC, and noted that the GOK had submitted several worthy projects for Global Partnership consideration. The Ambassador confirmed that joining BWC would certainly help the GOK gain support from other G8 governments in its bid for Partnership recipient status.

WMDIE-K Bio and PPI

5. (SBU) Shakirov and the Ambassador discussed two current issues in the WMDIE-K area: next steps after the signing of the biological program amendment, and the potential PPI amendment. Shakirov repeated what Post has been told by MFA about GOK intentions for the biological program annual work plan, i.e. that they are devising an interagency plan which they intend to offer alongside the U.S. plan at a meeting in the near future. Shakirov did not indicate which dates the GOK favors for the next meeting.

6. (SBU) With regard to the proposed PPI amendment, Shakirov said that the question was under interagency review and was not likely to be resolved "as quickly as the last one" (presumably WMDIE-K bio). The Ambassador explained the precarious situation with respect to PPI funding, but Shakirov's response suggested that the GOK was in no hurry

to sign the amendment. (Note: This statement conflicts with previous assurances to the Embassy that the amendment had been given to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) to be prepared for Minister Shkolnik's signature with no recommended changes in early November 2004. In a subsequent phone call to EBO, one of Shakirov's

staffers indicated that the DFM had asked him after the meeting to check on the status of the PPI agreement; post is awaiting clarification of whether Shakirov's comments may have been off the mark.)

17. (U) Minimize for Dushanbe considered.

Ordway

NNNN